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GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

കേരള ഗസറ്റ്
KERALA GAZETTE

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2026

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THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA

NOTIFICATION

No.DI-1-64350/2025 *28th February 2026*

High Court of Kerala (Designation of Senior Advocates) Rules, 2026

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub section (1) of Section 34, read with sub section (2) of Section 16, of the Advocates' Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961), the High Court of Kerala hereby makes the following rules.

RULES

1.(a) These Rules shall be called "the High Court of Kerala (Designation of Senior Advocates) Rules, 2026."

(b) These Rules shall come into force at once.

2. The High Court may designate an Advocate as a Senior Advocate, if in its opinion, by virtue of his/ her ability, standing at the Bar, or special knowledge or experience in law, the said Advocate deserves conferment of such distinction.

3. (1) An Advocate may be considered for being designated as a Senior Advocate on an application made by the Advocate concerned.

(2) Besides, the Full Court, by consensus, may confer the designation of Senior Advocate, suo motu, on any advocate otherwise eligible, if in the opinion of the Full Court, he/ she is a person of exceptional quality, eminence and has special expertise in any field of law.

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4. Advocates shall be eligible for designation as Senior Advocates, provided:

a) he/she has actually practiced as an Advocate for not less than ten years or he/she has ten-years' combined standing as an Advocate and as a District and Sessions Judge or as a Judicial Member of any Tribunal in India whose qualification for eligibility for such appointment is not less than that prescribed for appointment as a District Judge, out of which 3 years standing as an Advocate shall be post retirement.

(b) has attained the age of 45 years, unless the age limit is relaxed by the Full Court.

(c) has attained position of eminence at the Bar and maintains high standard of decorum.

(d) he/she follows the highest standards of professional etiquette and ethics;

(e) he/she acts as a mentor to the Junior Advocates;

(f) he/she has participated in pro bono work;

(g) he/she has not been convicted by a competent court of law for an offence involving moral turpitude or contempt of court unless purged as per law: or should not have been punished by the Bar Council of Kerala or by Bar Council of India for any act of misconduct as per Section 35(3) of the Advocates Act, 1961.

5. (1) The Advocate who applies for being designated as a Senior Advocate, should have been an income-tax assessee for the last ten years as on the date of the application.

(2) All applications shall be made in the manner prescribed from time to time and specified in the notice issued by the High Court under rule 8(1).

6.(1) All applications for designation of an Advocate as a Senior Advocate shall be addressed to the Registrar General and shall be submitted within the time prescribed in the notice issued under Rule 8(1) and shall contain the particulars set out in Annexure-A appended to these rules.

(2) The application shall contain a declaration by the Advocate concerned that no recommendation/application to designate him/her as a Senior Advocate has been rejected by the Supreme Court of India or the High Court of Kerala or by any other High Court in India, within a period of two years immediately preceeding the date of notification issued under rule 8(1).

(3) Canvassing in any form shall disqualify the Advocate concerned from being designated.

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7. The Secretariat of the Registrar General of the High Court shall be the Secretariat for the designation process.

8. (1) The notice inviting applications from Advocates shall be published in the official website of the High Court of Kerala. In addition, intimation will also be given to the High Court Advocate's Association and the Bar Associations in the State.
(2) The Registrar General shall as soon as the applications for designation are received, cause a summary of the applications for designation to be published in the official website of the High Court of Kerala and invite suggestions/views of the members of the Bar and other stakeholders in the matter, within 30 days from the date of publication. The suggestions/views shall be in writing, shall bear the name and full address of the sender and shall be addressed to the Registrar General of the High Court. Anonymous petitions /representations will not be entertained.

9. (1) All applications for designation as Senior Advocates shall be scrutinized by the Secretariat, which shall collect relevant data and information with regard to the reputation, conduct and integrity of the Advocate concerned, from such source(s), as may be decided by the Chief Justice; verify the details regarding his/her participation in *pro bono* work, if any and other matters referred to in the particulars furnished in terms of Rule 6(1) and prepare and submit a report to the Full Court.

(2) In the case of lawyers practicing in the Trial courts, the High Court may obtain the remarks of the District Judge concerned with regard to the particulars mentioned in sub rule (1).

10. After the expiry of the period of 30 days from the date of publication of the particulars of the applicants in the official website of the High Court of Kerala, the Registrar General shall place the applications for designation before the Full Court on the orders of the Chief Justice.

11. The Full Court shall consider each name placed before it. An application for designation as a Senior Advocate shall be considered as accepted by the Full Court if there is consensus on designating such Advocate. In the case of an application on which there is no consensus, it shall be considered as accepted if majority of the Judges present and voting, vote in favour of such applicant. The manner of voting shall be decided by the Full Court. The final decision of the Full Court will be communicated individually to all the applicants.

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12. (1) An application for designation which is not accepted by the Full Court will be considered afresh only after the expiry of a period of two years from the date on which the application was not accepted by the Full Court and that too, only on receipt of a fresh application for designation by following the procedure applicable at that time.

(2) All cases deferred by the Full Court shall not be considered until the expiry of the period fixed by the Full Court in its resolution

13. (1) The designation of an Advocate as a Senior Advocate shall be liable to be revoked, after due notice to him/her, in the event of it being found by the Bar Council of India/Bar Council of Kerala/Bar Council of any other State that he/she has committed professional/other misconduct as per Section 35(3) of the Advocates Act, 1961 or if the High Court is satisfied that he/she has violated all or any of the provisions of the Rules framed and issued by the High Court of Kerala under sub-section (1) of Section 34 of the Advocates Act, 1961. The designation shall also be liable to be revoked after due notice to the Senior Advocate concerned if he has done an act which in the opinion of the High Court, dis-entitles him/her to continue to be worthy of the designation or if he/she is guilty of moral turpitude or contempt of court. The explanation offered by the Senior Advocate shall be placed before the Full Court for due deliberation and consideration. The proposal for revocation of designation shall be considered as accepted by the Full Court if two-third of the Judges present and voting, vote in favour of such revocation.

(2) Nothing contained in these rules shall stand in the way of an Advocate who has been designated by the High Court of Kerala as a Senior Advocate, from submitting an application to withdraw or recall his/her designation as a Senior Advocate. In the event of such an application addressed to the Registrar General being submitted, the Registrar General shall place it before the Chief Justice for appropriate orders thereon.

14. On the designation of an Advocate as a Senior Advocate or on the revocation or withdrawal of such designation, the Registrar General shall notify the said fact to the Secretary General, Supreme Court of India, other High Courts, the Bar Council of Kerala, the Bar Council of India, the Bar Councils of other States in India and to all the District and Sessions Judges subordinate to the High Court of Kerala. The notification shall also be published in the official website of the High Court and a copy thereof communicated to the Judges of the High Court.

15. A record of all decisions relating to designation/revocation/ withdrawal of designation shall be maintained in the Secretariat of the Committee.

16. Senior Advocates, upon designation, shall undertake pro-bono work and conduct such

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matters before the High Court or any Court in the District Judiciary, and shall also offer guidance to any member of the Bar who seeks it.

17. On the date of coming into force of these Rules, the Rules issued by the High Court of Kerala under Section 16(2) of the Advocates Act, 1961**,** by Notification No.DI-90619/2014 dated 16.02.2018 and published in the Kerala Gazette No.11 dated 13.03.2018 as amended by DI-1/62004/2023 dated 20.10.2023 and published in Kerala Gazette No: 43 dated 24.10.2023 shall stand repealed.

18. All questions relating to the interpretation and/ or application of these Rules shall be referred to the Chief Justice of the High Court of Kerala whose decision shall be final. The Chief Justice may issue directions for the removal of difficulties either in general terms or in a particular instance as the exigencies may require.

[ANNEXURE-A]

APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS SENIOR ADVOCATE

		Recent Passport size colour photograph (original) to be pasted here
1.	Name of the Applicant-Advocate: (Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms.)	
2.	Date of Birth	DD-MM-YY
3	Age	_____- Years

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<table>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4.</td><td>Address in full:</td><td>(i) Office -
(ii) Residence -</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>5.</td><td>Contact Details</td><td>(i) Landline -
(ii) Cellphone -
(iii) Email -</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>6.</td><td colspan="2">Educational / Professional Qualifications:</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>7.</td><td colspan="2">(i) Date, Month and Year of Enrolment as an Advocate

(ii) Enrolment Number (Copy of Enrolment Certificate to be attached)

(iii) Number of years of practice.</td><td>_____-Years</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.</td><td colspan="2">Number in the Roll of Advocates maintained by the State Bar Council</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>9.</td><td colspan="2"><u>For applicants practicing in the High Court</u>

Number of reported judgments in cases in which the applicant has appeared as-

(i) lead arguing counsel; and

(ii) assisting counsel

(only orders that lay down any principle of law)

(Details to be furnished in Forms 1 & 2)

NB: Copy of any of the 10 such Judgements must be submitted along with application</td><td><table><tr><th>Lead arguing counsel

(No.of judgments only)</th><th>Assisting counsel (No.of judgments only)</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td><u>For applicants practicing in the Trial Courts/ Specialized Tribunals</u>

Copies of 10 judgments must be submitted along with the application, of which 5 judgments must be originating from Appeal Suits or Sessions cases delivered by District and Sessions Court or Additional District and Sessions Court.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.</td><td><u>For applicants practicing in the High Court</u>

Any 5 Synopses drafted by the applicant

(Details to be furnished in form 3 - copies also to be submitted)</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12.</td><td>Pro bono / amicus curiae work (Details to be submitted in form 4)</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>13.</td><td>Whether the applicant is a first generation lawyer?</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>14.</td><td>Articles/books published, experience of teaching assignments in the field of law, guest lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law

(Details to be furnished in form 5)</td><td><table><tr><td>Academic Articles/ books</td><td>Teaching assignments</td><td>Guest lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>15.</td><td>Whether the applicant is a member of the High Court Bar Association or any other Bar Association</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

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16.	Courts where the applicant is practising: (Court-wise period may be indicated)	Supreme Court of India/High Court(s)/ District/ Sessions Court(s)/ Tribunal(s) etc		
			From	To
17.	Tribunal(s) where the applicant has specialized practice (Applicable to those practising before Tribunals)	Tribunal(s)	Duration	
			From	To
18.	Nature of practice - e.g. Civil, Criminal, Constitutional, Taxation, Labour, Company, Service, etc.			
19.	Field of Law-domain expertise (such as, Constitutional law, Inter-State Water Disputes, Criminal law, Civil Law Arbitration law, Corporate law, Family law, Human Rights, Public Interest Litigation, International law, law relating to women) in which the applicant has specialization / expertise.			
20.	Whether the applicant had applied earlier to the High Court of Kerala for designation; if so, current status of application.			

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21.	Whether the applicant has applied to Supreme Court / any other High Court; if so, current status of application			
22.	Whether any FIR has ever been filed against the applicant; if so, current status must be indicated.			
23.	Whether the applicant is a party to any civil, criminal or other litigation. If so, the nature of involvement.			
24.	(i)	Has the applicant at any point of time been:		
		(a)	arrested?	
		(b)	prosecuted?	
		(c)	kept under detention?	
		(d)	bound down?	
		(e)	fined by a court of law?	
		(f)	convicted by a court of law for any Offence?	
		(g)	rusticated by any authority/ institution/council ?	
		(h)	debarred from any examination or debarred / disqualified by any public commission/ authority?	
	(ii)	Is any case pending against the applicant in any court of law at the time of submitting this application?		

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	(iii)	If the answer to any of the above-mentioned questions is 'Yes', give full particulars of the case / arrest / detention / fine / conviction / sentence / punishment etc. and / or the nature of the case pending in the Court / Authority or Institution etc., at the time of submitting this application	
25.	Whether any proceedings were initiated or are pending against the applicant before Bar Council of India, Bar Council of Kerala or any other State Bar Council? If so, particulars thereof.		
26.	Whether the applicant is an income tax assessee for the last 10 years.? If so, attach the relevant documents .		
27.	General state of health		
28.	Any other relevant information		
	DECLARATION I_____ , Advocate hereby verify that the information furnished above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Nothing material is concealed or suppressed therefrom. I understand that furnishing of false information or suppression of any factual information would render me unfit for being designated as Senior Advocate. Date:- [*Signature of the Applicant*]		

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PRESCRIBED FORMATS

Form 1

LEAD ARGUING COUNSEL (For applicants practicing in the High Court)

List of Reported Judgments (only orders that lay down any principle of law)

Sl. No	Court(s)	Citation/ Case Number	Cause Title and subject matter	Decided on	Legal formulation advanced by the applicant

Form 2

ASSISTING COUNSEL (For applicants practicing in the High Court)

List of Reported Judgments (only orders that lay down any principle of law)

Sl. No	Court(s)	Citation/ Case Number	Cause Title and subject matter	Decided on	Legal formulation advanced by the applicant

Form 3

Details of 5 Synopses (For applicants practicing in the High Court)

Sl. No	Court(s)	Case Number	Cause Title	Details

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Form 4

List of matters in which you have appeared as Pro-Bono/ Amicus Curiae

Sl. No	Court(s)	Citation/ Case Number	Cause Title	Decided on	Reportable/Unreportable

Form 5

Details of academic articles/books published, experience of teaching assignments in the field of law, guest lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law

Sl.No.	Topic of published academic articles/ Books/ Lecture/ Courses	Experience details of teaching assignment and guest lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law	Names of law schools or professional institutions connected with law	Any other relevant details

(By Order)

Ernakulam

Gopakumar G
REGISTRAR GENERAL

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This is not part of the notification, but is intended to indicate its general purport.)

The High Court of Kerala had framed the *High Court of Kerala (Designation of*

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Senior Advocates) Rules, 2018 in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Indira Jaising v. Supreme Court of India (AIR 2017 SC 5017)* and in *Indira Jaising v. Supreme Court of India [(2023) 8 SCC 1].* Now, pursuant to the decision dated 13 May 2025 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Jitender @ Kalla v. State (Govt. of NCT of Delhi) & Anr. (2025 INSC 667)* , the High Court has decided to draft new Rules repealing the *High Court of Kerala (Designation of Senior Advocates) Rules, 2018.*

This notification is intended to achieve the above object.

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